

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the following discussion, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1-13 and 15-22 are pending in this application. Claims 1-3, 5, 7, 10, 15-17, 19 and 21 are amended by the present response. The changes to the claims are believed to find support in the disclosure as originally filed, at least at, page 21, lines 11-17 and thus are not believed to raise a question of new matter.

In the outstanding Office Action, Claims 1-8, 12, 13 and 15-22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by Admitted Prior Art (herein "APA"). Claims 9-11 were objected to as dependent upon a rejected base claim, but were noted as allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the limitations of their base claim and any intervening claims.

Initially, Applicants gratefully acknowledge the early indication of the allowable subject matter in Claims 9-11. However, since Applicants consider that Claim 1 as amended patentably defines over the cited art, Claims 9-11 have presently been maintained in dependent form.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of Claims 1-8, 12, 14 and 15-22 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as anticipated by APA.

Amended Claim 1 recites, in part,

a plurality of memory cell arrays having a plurality of memory cells or memory cell units each of which include a plurality of memory cells, arranged in a matrix, the plurality of memory cell arrays being located independently of each other;  
a first memory cell array included in the plurality of memory cell arrays;  
a second memory cell array included in the plurality of memory cell arrays;  
a third memory cell array included in the plurality of memory cell arrays;  
a fourth memory cell array included in the plurality of memory cell arrays;

a first memory cell array group including the first memory cell array and the second memory cell array; and  
a second memory cell array group including the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array,  
wherein the first memory cell array, the second memory cell array, the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array are different from one another, a first Pass/Fail signal indicative of success or failure of an operation is outputted in accordance with each of the first memory cell array group and the second memory cell array group (emphasis added).

Additionally, Amended Claim 15 recites, in part,

...wherein the first memory cell array, the second memory cell array, the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array are different from one another, and first Pass/Fail signals, each of which indicates success or failure of an operation of a respective one of the first memory cell array group and the second memory cell array group, are outputted (emphasis added).

As is described in Figure 2 and on page 7, lines 3-7, the APA describes pass/fail signals for each memory cell array. However, the APA does not describe or suggest a first memory cell array group including the first memory cell array and the second memory cell array and a second memory cell array group including the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array, where the first memory cell array, the second memory cell array, the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array are different from one another, a first Pass/Fail signal indicative of success or failure of an operation is outputted in accordance with each of the first memory cell array group and the second memory cell array group, as is recited in Claim 1.

In other words, Claim 1 has been amended to recite that two memory cell arrays are included in a first group and another two different memory cell arrays are included in a second group and a pass/fail signal is provided for each memory cell array group. This feature is not described or suggested in the APA.

Additionally, with respect to Claim 15, the APA does not describe or suggest a first memory cell array group that includes the first memory cell array and the second memory cell array and a second memory cell array group that includes the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array, where the first memory cell array, the second memory cell array, the third memory cell array and the fourth memory cell array are different from one another. Further, the APA does not describe that first Pass/Fail signals, each of which indicates success or failure of an operation of a respective one of the first memory cell array group and the second memory cell array group, are outputted, as is recited in Claim 15.

Accordingly as the APA does not teach or suggest all of the features recited in amended Claims 1 and 15, Applicants respectfully submit that amended Claims 1 and 15 and claims depending therefrom patentably distinguish over APA.

Consequently, in light of the above discussion and in view of the present amendment, the present application is believed to be in condition for allowance and an early and favorable action to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,  
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.



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Eckhard H. Kuesters  
Attorney of Record  
Registration No. 28,870

Customer Number  
**22850**

Tel: (703) 413-3000  
Fax: (703) 413 -2220  
(OSMMN 06/04)

**CARL E. SCHLIER**  
**REGISTRATION NO. 34,426**

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